

died while waiting for an organ, 142 of them in my home State of Ohio.

As of May 1 of this year, which are the most current available figures that I have, there were 46,128 Americans on the waiting list for organs. That was an increase over the April numbers, just 1 month before.

On April 3, there were 45,583 people on the waiting list. So just in 1 month, over 500 people were added to that waiting list.

As of May 1, 32,256 people were waiting for kidneys. That is an increase of 344 people in less than a month.

On that same date, 6,273 people were waiting for a liver, and that is 137 more than in April.

On that same date, May 1, there were 1,339 people waiting for a kidney-pancreas transplant, 30 more than in April.

And on that same date, there were 3,599 people waiting for a new heart, 50 more than a month before on April 3.

Mr. President, if we ask our expert on this, our colleague from Tennessee, Dr. Frist, he will tell us these people can be helped. He will tell us these people did not have to die. He will tell us that the technology is there to save them and that what we are lacking is enough organ donations, what we are lacking is enough family members who lose a loved one who are willing, in a time of great tragedy and great hurt, to say, "Yes; yes, I will agree to have my loved one's organs transplanted into someone else so they can live."

The technology is there to save these lives. It is the organs that are missing. That is why all American families need to talk about this issue. It is something we as Americans do not want to talk about. We do not want to talk about death. We do not want to talk about funerals. We do not want to think a tragedy may strike. But it is important that we talk about this before something happens.

I am convinced, and, in fact, the statistics, polls and studies show it, the vast majority of Americans, if they thought they could help someone, would want their organs donated to save someone's life. The problem is that as a people, we do not talk about it; as families, we do not talk about it. So the next of kin, the families, the fathers, the mothers, the brothers, the sisters who have to make this decision do not really know what to do because that issue has never been discussed. That is why the national campaign is to get families to talk about it, because we believe if families do talk about this, they will ultimately make the right decision and lives will be saved.

We need to do everything we can to make sure that this issue does get the attention of all Americans. We need literally to start a conversation about this at the kitchen table of every single family in this country. We need to find creative ways to do this, creative ways to get people's attention.

There is one particular measure that I would like to talk about today that I

think will get people's attention. Tomorrow, the citizens stamp advisory committee will meet to review and make recommendations for new postage stamps. Nearly 300,000 Americans have already signed a petition urging this stamp advisory committee to approve a postage stamp honoring organ and tissue donation. I believe that if we put our message on the envelopes of millions of Americans, we will strike an important blow for public awareness of the need for organs.

Here is one example of what the stamp could look like. I am not an artist. I did not draw this. Anybody who knows me knows I did not do this. But there are some creative people in our office who had some ideas, and they put this together. We bring it to the floor only to show what a stamp like this could look like, and the message is pretty basic: "Organ Donation. Share Your Life . . . Share Your Decision." That is the national campaign for people to talk about it before tragedy does strike.

The green ribbon in this stamp symbolizes life. The stamp would send the message that organ donation is a gift of life. This is literally true. The donor shortage in this country is one of the most important problems in health care today and a problem that is not easily solved. I believe the stamp advisory committee should approve this organ donation stamp in the same spirit in which it approved this year's breast cancer awareness stamp.

By approving this stamp, the advisory committee will literally be saving lives. It will prompt exactly the kind of family discussions we have been trying to promote. This postage stamp would save lives and would save lives without major cost or major effort.

The advisory committee should heed the appeals of over 300,000 concerned Americans, including some Members of Congress, to go ahead and approve this stamp. By doing so, the postal advisory committee would send a strong message to all Americans about the life-saving decision every single family can make.

I thank the Chair, yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE OF LANDS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 701, and further, that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 701) to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to convey lands to the City of Rolla, Missouri.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be deemed read the third time, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be placed in the appropriate place in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 701) was deemed read the third time and passed.

RELIEF OF BENCHMARK RAIL GROUP

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 436, H.R. 419.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 419) for the relief of Benchmark Rail Group, Inc.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be deemed read a third time, passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; and that any statements relating to the bill be placed at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 419) was deemed read the third time and passed.

JOINT MEETING OF THE TWO HOUSES

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the President of the Senate be authorized to appoint a committee on the part of the Senate to join with a like committee on the part of the House of Representatives to escort His Excellency Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel, into the House Chamber for the joint meeting on Wednesday, July 10, 1996.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEASURE READ FOR THE FIRST TIME—S. 1936

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I understand that S. 1936, introduced today by Senator CRAIG, is at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1936) to amend the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982.

Mr. LOTT. I now ask for its second reading, and I object to my own request on behalf of the Senators on the Democratic side of the aisle.